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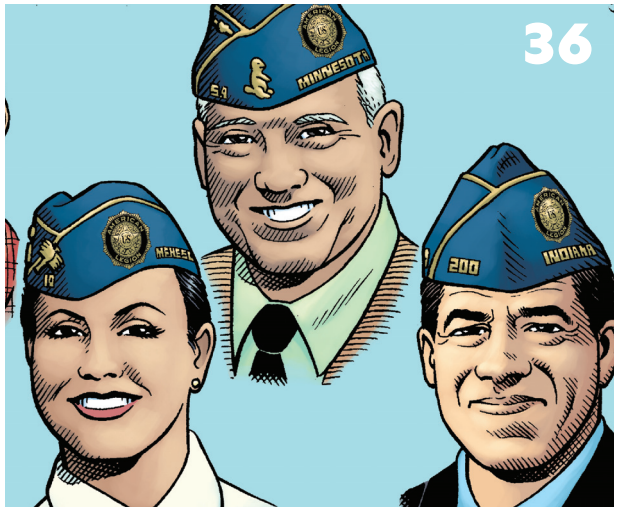

ON THE COVER

Twelve teams compete in a Halo LAN tournament at Cyber City Esports in Gardena, Calif., put on by Regiment Gaming's Veteran Gaming League with support from the American Red Cross and American Legion Post 283.

Photo by Jeric Wilhelmsen

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View videos, read more stories and find resources at ***legion.org***.

The American Legion Magazine, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 1.6 million members. These wartime veterans, working through more than 12,000 community-level posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.

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Legion Family steps up to help Sunshine State

Twenty-two years of a couple's life together scattered in a pile of rubbish. That's how Scott and Deborah Huizenga describe seeing their household belongings strewn among the hundreds of miles of debris lining the streets and shores of Florida's coastal communities at the start of the holiday season.

Unfortunately, the couple's insurance policy did not cover the damage inflicted on their St. James City home by the surge and winds of Hurricane Ian, one of the deadliest storms to hit the state in nearly 90 years. Scott, a member of Sons of The American Legion Squadron 136, received the largest grant possible from our National Emergency Fund (NEF) to help cover part of the cost. Deborah, a member of Unit 136, received a grant from the Auxiliary.

"The (NEF) grant went to help replace our roof and a lot of the stuff inside so we can at least move in," Scott says. "We lost some, but a lot lost everything." As for the Auxiliary grant, it will help replace appliances, Deborah adds.

As national commander, I am thankful for, and proud of, the support provided by the entire American Legion Family during Florida's great time of need. In the weeks following Hurricane Ian, 29 departments contributed relief items and supplies to the Sunshine State. Financial contributions from Legion Family members came from all 55 departments.

In fact, the Legion Family has shipped so many supplies that some Florida posts now face the additional challenge of storage and distribution. "Money gives us the greatest flexibility in terms of purchasing items that are truly needed," says Bill Hoppner, the Department of Florida's disaster-preparedness chairman.

More than 120 people across the southern United States are believed to have lost their lives to Hurricane Ian. Eleven American Legion posts in Florida were heavily damaged, with six categorized as total losses or inoperable. You can help by donating to the NEF at **legion.org** or by visiting department websites to learn which areas were most affected by these disasters.

THE AMERICAN Legion MAGAZINE

Veterans Strengthening America

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War & Reckoning

I read with interest Michael S. Bryant's piece outlining some of the reasons Vladimir Putin may never be held personally responsible for his country's war crimes in Ukraine (November). Veto votes by Russia and China at the United Nations to establish war crimes tribunals make it impossible to hold the leader of that state subject to international criminal law.

One thing Bryant did not mention is that even if Putin were to be removed from office, he still could not be tried *in absentia*; Article 61 of the Russian constitution forbids (and therefore shields its citizens from) extradition and deportation. In the absence of the Russian parliament's rewrite of the law, he would remain in Russia. Martial law post-military coup with the suspension of the constitution seems to be the most plausible vehicle for Putin to face justice.

Marcellus J. Gilreath, Euclid, Ohio

Getty

Act of Justice

Regarding the PACT Act (October), it's about time Marine veterans, their families and base workers get justice. But it never hits the people responsible for the contamination or cover-up. When do they get punished?

Henry J. Teja, Massapequa Park, N.Y.

The tolling of the bells

The piece on the Bells of Peace program (Rapid Fire, November) is a wonderful article in a great issue. I understand the ceremony's timing, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, but the significance of 21 tolls escapes me.

Joe Phoenix, Manassas, Va.

Editor's note: *The 21 tolls of a bell are based on the 21-gun salute and symbolize the nation's highest honor.*

***THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE* WELCOMES YOUR OPINIONS**

Include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters published are subject to editing. Due to the volume of mail received, not every letter can be acknowledged.

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David Parker, USIC vice president of corporate affairs, at a Veterans Day ceremony at the company's national headquarters in Indianapolis. USIC is the largest provider of utility damage prevention services in North America, with operations in 48 states and Canada. More than 1,000 USIC employees are veterans.

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Capt. Taylor's heroic rescue

I read with great interest about the quest to upgrade the Silver Star awarded to Royce Williams to the Medal of Honor (Rapid Fire, November). He is certainly deserving of such an upgrade for his selfless and courageous actions those many years ago.

I'd like to bring to your attention a similar situation, and our efforts to upgrade the Silver Star awarded to Army helicopter gunship pilot Capt. Larry Taylor to the Medal of Honor, for his heroic actions June 18, 1968, in Vietnam. Taylor is a life member of American Legion Post 14 in Chattanooga, Tenn.

I was the assistant team leader of a four-man long-range patrol team of F Company, 52nd Infantry (LRP), 1st Infantry Division, operating northwest of Saigon, when we were surrounded by an approximately company-strength unit of the North Vietnamese Army. Only the extraordinary air support provided by then-Lt. Taylor saved us from being overrun. Completely out of rockets and "mini-gun" ammunition, and with his "20 minutes fuel" caution light flaring (our team was likewise out of ammunition), he risked his life to extract our team on the outside of his dedicated Cobra helicopter. It had no cabin in which we could ride, requiring us to hold on to the Cobra's rocket pods and/or landing skids.

David M. Hill, Dayton, Nev.

Editor's note:
The November 2022 cover photo was taken during a Veterans Day wreath-laying at the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 2018, by Alex Wroblewski. The officer in front is a member of the U.S. Park Police, part of the National Park Service, which protects more than 3,000 memorials and monuments nationwide.

THE PLAYLIST

American Legion videos you don't want to miss.

Photo by Jeric Wilhelmsen

'Exhilarating': Commander visits Coast Guard stations, drives motor lifeboat
American Legion National Commander Vincent "Jim" Troiola delivers a message of support for Coast Guard personnel in Oregon.

Yoga for healing
American Legion Post 94 in Babylon, N.Y., opens up to the physical and mental benefits of the Veterans Yoga Project.

Veterans Strengthening America
Seven videos promoting the "Veterans Strengthening America" message can be viewed, downloaded and shared from the Legion's Vimeo platform at **vimeo.com/showcase/9037531**.

Visit **legion.org/magazine/videos**, subscribe to the Legion's YouTube channel or check out playlists on **vimeo.com**.

Photo by Ben Mikesell

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Approximate number of veteran, military and spouse career events conducted annually that are supported or directly coordinated by The American Legion

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Whereas ...

In August 2021 and the preceding months, the order was given for U.S. troops to begin returning home from Afghanistan and for Operation Enduring Freedom to come to a close ...

Intelligence analysts predicted that the U.S.-Allied Afghan government would have been more resilient to take over, but instead we witnessed a swift collapse of Kabul, the regional government, and a near-complete takeover of the country by the Taliban ...

Thousands of American forces, diplomats, State Department staff, American citizens, our coalition allies, special immigrant visa recipients, interpreters, their families and many other vulnerable Afghans who supported our efforts in the war were left in a precarious situation with much fear about how they would be able to escape ...

In response to the fall of Kabul, the United States and its allies committed to the rescue of thousands of individuals from Afghanistan by completing one of the largest airlifts in history ...

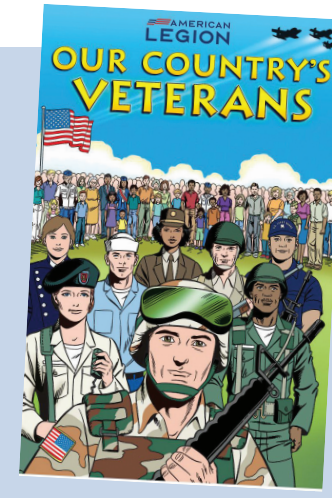
During this operation, between Aug. 14 and Aug. 25, 2021, U.S. forces evacuated over 82,300 individuals from an incredibly dangerous situation, all while under duress stemming from enemy action and bombing attacks at the Hamid Karzai International Airport ...

Be it resolved ...

We formally request that those who served directly in support of the Kabul Airlift be specially recognized through the awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal, the Medal for Humane Action (historically awarded only once, during the Berlin Airlift), or a similarly prestigious award to recognize their incredible contribution to the defense of our nation and allies and for recognition of their incredible aerial achievement in a humanitarian cause.

Passed, American Legion National Convention, Aug. 30-Sept. 1, 2022

'Our Country's Veterans' comic gets a refresh



The American Legion's "Our Country's Veterans" comic book educates young people about those who have worn the nation's uniform: who they are, their service and sacrifices they've made, how to thank a veteran and more. An updated version now reflects all war eras, changes in uniform and dress style, and the diversity of today's armed forces, with all six branches of service represented.

"Our Country's Veterans" is available for purchase through Emblem Sales for 75 cents each, or 100 for 59 cents each. The comic book is an educational tool Legion Family members can give to elementary students to help them understand military service. The story is about four children who help dedicate a veterans memorial, while hearing the stories and contributions of friends and neighbors who served in the military. Together they learn the importance of thanking America's veterans.

The update to "Our Country's Veterans" is part of the Legion's "Rally Around the Flag" campaign. Two other American Legion comic books – "I Pledge Allegiance" and "Our Country's Flag" – have also been updated and will be available soon.

Photo by Logan Cyrus

92,162 Units collected through The American Legion's Blood Donor Program in the 2021-2022 membership year, with 67% of posts reporting

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Top podcast downloads of 2022

The weekly American Legion Tango Alpha Lima podcast grew exponentially during 2022. As of Nov. 21, 12 episodes during the third season had more than 900 downloads. Topics and guests include:

1 **Ashley Gutermuth,** military-themed comedian and spouse of an Air Force reservist

2 **Former Marine Corps combat correspondent Amy Forsythe,** who uncovered a case of stolen valor

3 Tango Alpha Lima's visit to the **Student Veterans of America** conference

4 How veterans can make informed decisions as they navigate Medicare and combine those benefits with VA benefits

5 **Global War on Terrorism Memorial Foundation CEO Michael Rodriguez,** on the memorial's progress

6 **Army veteran Logan Isaac,** author of "God is a Grunt"

7 The Legion's legislative priorities for 2022

8 **Army veteran and counselor Virginia Cruse,** who offers tips on coping with combat-related trauma

9 **American Legion member Lia Mort,** who won the "Tough As Nails" reality show competition

10 **Retired Air Force Col. Merryl Tengesdal,** the first African American woman to fly the U-2

11 **Marine veteran Chad Robichaux,** who shares his story of overcoming PTSD and starting a faith-based nonprofit

12 Guests discuss **Honor Flight,** including the first trip with all women veterans

A new episode is published each Tuesday by 9 a.m. Eastern. To listen to or view the more than 150 Tango Alpha Lima podcasts, visit **legion.org/tangoalphalima**.

22 Players and coaches in the 2022 Major League Baseball playoffs who played American Legion Baseball

Texas post color guard presents at LPGA tournament

The color guard of Holley-Riddle Post 21 presented the colors and tended the Hole 18 flag pin during the final round of the Ascendant LPGA golf tournament Oct. 2 at the Golf Clubs at The Tribute in The Colony, Texas.

Post 22 assembled an all-woman detail, with Juana Carabajal and Mary Garcia on rifles and Chastity Hamer and Patricia Zuczek on flags. The team also met with golf legend Kathy Whitworth and tournament champion Charley Hull.

The LPGA players, caddies, Tribute crew and Volunteers of America staff were very appreciative of our veterans; in fact, several caddies served in the military.

A special thanks to our city leaders Mayor Richard Boyer, Judy Ensweiler, Brian Wade, and the audience at Hole 18 for supporting our veteran community and for making The Colony a great city.

Submitted by Patricia Zuczek, Holley-Riddle Post 21, The Colony, Texas

Photo courtesy Patricia Zuczek

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HEALTH & FITNESS BY JENNIFER CAMPBELL

Make your resolutions stick

Most new year's resolutions are related to fitness, healthy eating and similar goals. However, after three months, just 10% of people think their resolution will stick.

Behavior change and a long-term vision can help you achieve your resolutions. Research around health-related behaviors indicates that small changes lead to significant improvements in health outcomes, including increased life expectancy. These changes can have positive effects on those around us, too. To make changes, though, most people need first to believe that they have the ability to do so, and that they will succeed.

One widely recognized behavior-change theory is the health-belief model, which suggests that a person's belief in the risk of an illness or disease – along with their belief in the impact of the recommended health behavior or action – will predict the probability the person will change their behavior(s). Ultimately, a person's actions often depend on perception of the benefits and barriers related to that health behavior:

- **Perceived susceptibility:** What's the risk of acquiring an illness or disease?
- **Perceived severity:** What's the seriousness of contracting an illness or disease?
- **Perceived benefits:** How effectively can I reduce the threat?
- **Perceived barriers:** What obstacles are there?
- **Cue to action:** What's needed to accept a recommended health action?
- **Self-efficacy:** How confident am I in successfully performing a behavior?

In this model, the behaviors and opinions of the people around us highly influence our perceptions and are often anecdotal. If you're having trouble committing to a health or fitness goal, consider changing your framework on how you approach it.

For example, I want to reduce my chances of becoming diabetic or pre-diabetic by cutting daily sugar intake by 50% and being physically active three or four times a week.

- **Perceived susceptibility:** How likely am I to become diabetic?

Media Bakery

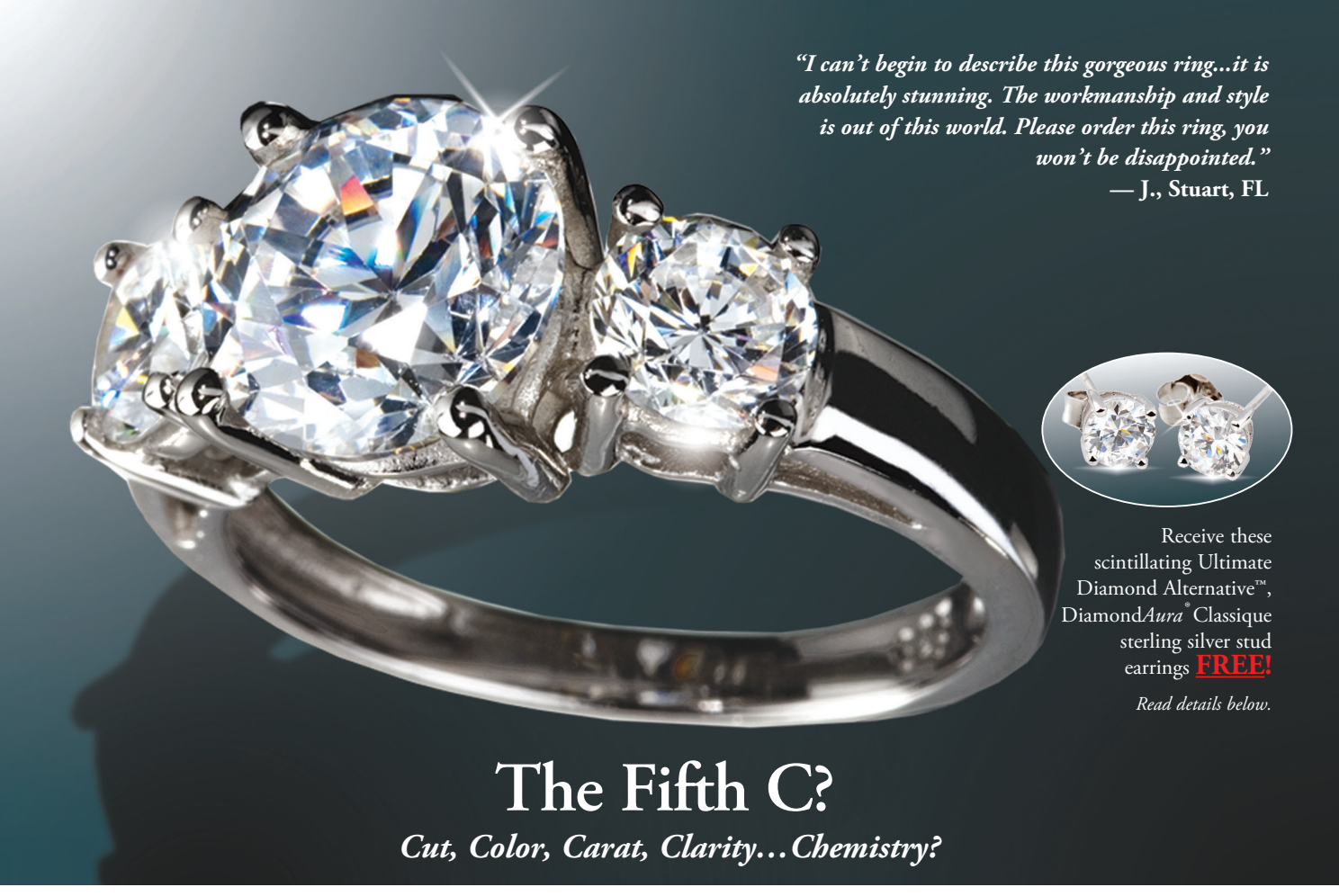
- **Perceived severity**: If I became diabetic, how serious would it be?
- **Perceived benefits:** How effective would treatment recommendations be?
- **Perceived barriers:** What are the obstacles?
- **Cue to action:** What is my motivation?
- **Self-efficacy:** Do I believe I can reach my goals?

Next, work on your mindset. Talk to your physician to get a clear understanding of your risk and how serious it could be. Seek ways to overcome barriers. Remind yourself of the benefits and the cue to action – the *why* of this journey. Talk to family, friends and colleagues who may have had similar experiences, and ask for support. Seek guidance from medical professionals who can help you create a strategy for positive health outcomes.

Your confidence will grow as you start to see small changes, which will help you stick to your plan, creating habits for positive change.

Army veteran Jennifer Campbell is a certified personal trainer with a master's degree in nutrition education. She is past commander of the California American Legion's 24th District and Hollywood Post 43.

Living Well is designed to provide general information. It is not intended to be, nor is it, medical advice. Readers should consult their physicians when they have health problems.



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Clarity	"IF"	**Clear**
Dispersion/Fire	0.044	**0.066**
2½ ctw ring	$60,000+	**$39**

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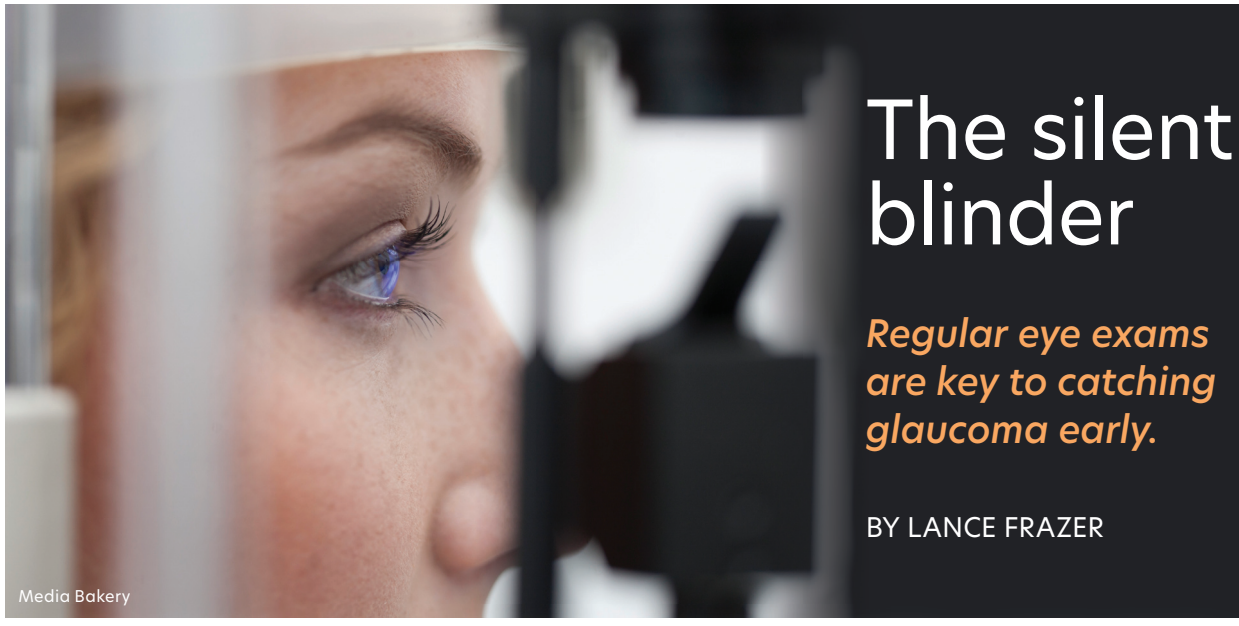

The silent blinder

Regular eye exams are key to catching glaucoma early.

BY LANCE FRAZER

Media Bakery

Glaucoma, where fluid builds up in the front part of the eye, is a condition affecting 80 million people worldwide. Left untreated, this pressure can damage the optic nerve and lead to vision loss and even blindness.

Thomas Brunner, president and CEO of the Glaucoma Research Foundation, says glaucoma can affect people of all ages, though it's more common in older adults. A person usually loses vision from the side first (up to 50% before it's noticed), making the disease difficult to detect.

"You see with your brain, not your eyes," Brunner says, "and the brain is so good at filling in information that we often don't know what we're not seeing."

Glaucoma worsens over time, affecting one or both eyes. There are options for treatment, but it must be detected early, and it's recommended people 40 and older get their eyes checked annually (earlier if there's a family history).

Rachel Lee, a glaucoma surgeon with the Mount Sinai Health System, says that while there are no specific causes for glaucoma, it can have a genetic component. The condition can also be related to medication use (i.e., steroids), trauma, smoking, diabetes and high blood pressure. Ethnicity may play a role too, with African Americans six to eight times more likely to have glaucoma than whites.

Half of people with glaucoma aren't aware of it, making eye exams critical, says Andrew Iwach, executive director of the Glaucoma Center of San Francisco. Unlike cataracts, glaucoma has symptoms that may not appear until very late.

A healthy diet, not smoking and being aware of your family's history are ways to be proactive, Iwach says. New treatments, new surgeries, technological advances – including a noninvasive ocular imaging method that may detect an early indicator of glaucoma – and a neuroprotective medication already in clinical trials are coming. Even so, get your eyes checked regularly, Iwach adds. "If we catch it early, we can almost always preserve the vision. You need to take charge."

Lance Frazer is a California-based freelance writer specializing in health and medicine, science, nature and the environment.

Media Bakery

11.5 Cups of water a woman in a temperate climate should drink per day

15.5 Cups a man should drink per day

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Why you need dental insurance in retirement.

Many Americans are fortunate to have dental coverage for their entire working life, through employer-provided benefits. When those benefits end with retirement, paying dental bills out-of-pocket can come as a shock, leading people to put off or even go without care.

Simply put — without dental insurance, there may be an important gap in your healthcare coverage.

When you're comparing plans ...

- ▶ Look for coverage that helps pay for major services. Some plans may limit the number of procedures — or pay for preventive care only.
- ▶ Look for coverage with no deductibles. Some plans may require you to pay hundreds out of pocket before benefits are paid.
- ▶ Shop for coverage with no annual maximum on cash benefits. Some plans have annual maximums of $1,000.

Medicare doesn't pay for dental care.[1]

That's right. As good as Medicare is, it was never meant to cover everything. That means if you want protection, you need to purchase individual insurance.

Early detection can prevent small problems from becoming expensive ones.

The best way to prevent large dental bills is preventive care. The American Dental Association recommends checkups twice a year.

Previous dental work can wear out.

Even if you've had quality dental work in the past, you shouldn't take your dental health for granted. In fact, your odds of having a dental problem only go up as you age.[2]

Treatment is expensive — especially the services people over 50 often need.

Consider these national average costs of treatment ... $217 for a checkup ... $189 for a filling ... $1,219 for a crown.[3] Unexpected bills like this can be a real burden, especially if you're on a fixed income.

1 "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2022. 2 "How might my oral and dental health change as I age?", www. usnews.com, 11/30/2018. 3 American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2018 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2018, American Dental Association.

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6247-0121

THE HONORING OUR PACT ACT

Legion monitoring progress, claims processing of historic relief package

"We've been seeing a lot of veterans suffering with rare cancers and auto-immune diseases, but more commonly, we are seeing a lot of veterans having issues with rhinitis, sinusitis, chronic bronchitis – any type of respiratory illness that seems to be reoccurring and long-lasting."

American Legion Veterans & Rehabilitation Division Director Katie Purswell, appearing on Comcast Newsmakers in late October

The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act became law Aug. 10 after relentless advocacy from The American Legion and other veterans groups.

By Oct. 22, nearly 113,000 VA disability claims had been filed from veterans and families whose service-connected illnesses had previously gone unrecognized, including post-9/11 veterans sickened by exposure to burn pits in Iraq and Afghanistan. The new law also opens VA health-care and disability benefits eligibility to qualified veterans exposed to Agent Orange in previously unrecognized locations, former personnel who served at atomic radiation clean-up sites and others.

In the months ahead, American Legion Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation policy leaders, claims specialists, service officers and others will monitor progress of PACT Act implementation and efficiency of claims processing.

9 Types of reproductive cancer specified in the list of conditions eligible for VA care and disability benefits under the PACT Act:

Female		Male
Cervical cancer	Vaginal cancer	Testicular cancer
Ovarian cancer	Vulvar cancer	Penile cancer
Uterine cancer	Breast cancer	Prostate cancer

CAMP LEJEUNE JUSTICE ACT

The Legion recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Bergmann & Moore, longtime provider of legal advice on VA benefits for service officers, to assist veterans and families who served or lived at Camp Lejeune, N.C., between Aug. 1, 1953, and Dec. 31, 1987. They can visit **camplejeunelitigationteam.com** or call **(800) 898-9450** to learn how the Camp Lejeune Justice Act may affect their VA benefits.

20+ Burn pit and other toxic exposure presumptive conditions eligible for VA disability benefits and health care based on the PACT Act, expanding services for Gulf War-era and post-9/11 veterans

Cancers

- Brain cancer
- Gastrointestinal cancer of any type
- Glioblastoma
- Head cancer of any type
- Kidney cancer
- Lymphatic cancer of any type
- Lymphoma of any type
- Melanoma
- Neck cancer of any type
- Pancreatic cancer
- Reproductive cancer of any type
- Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type

Illnesses

- Asthma diagnosed after service
- Chronic bronchitis
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Chronic rhinitis
- Chronic sinusitis
- Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis
- Emphysema
- Granulomatous disease
- Interstitial lung disease
- Pleuritis
- Pulmonary fibrosis
- Sarcoidosis

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Reverse: Mount Vernon & Heraldic Eagle

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BETTER — Proof Minted in San Francisco
4,894,044 struck **Just $29.95 ea.** +s/h
Sold Elsewhere for $44.50—SAVE $14.55

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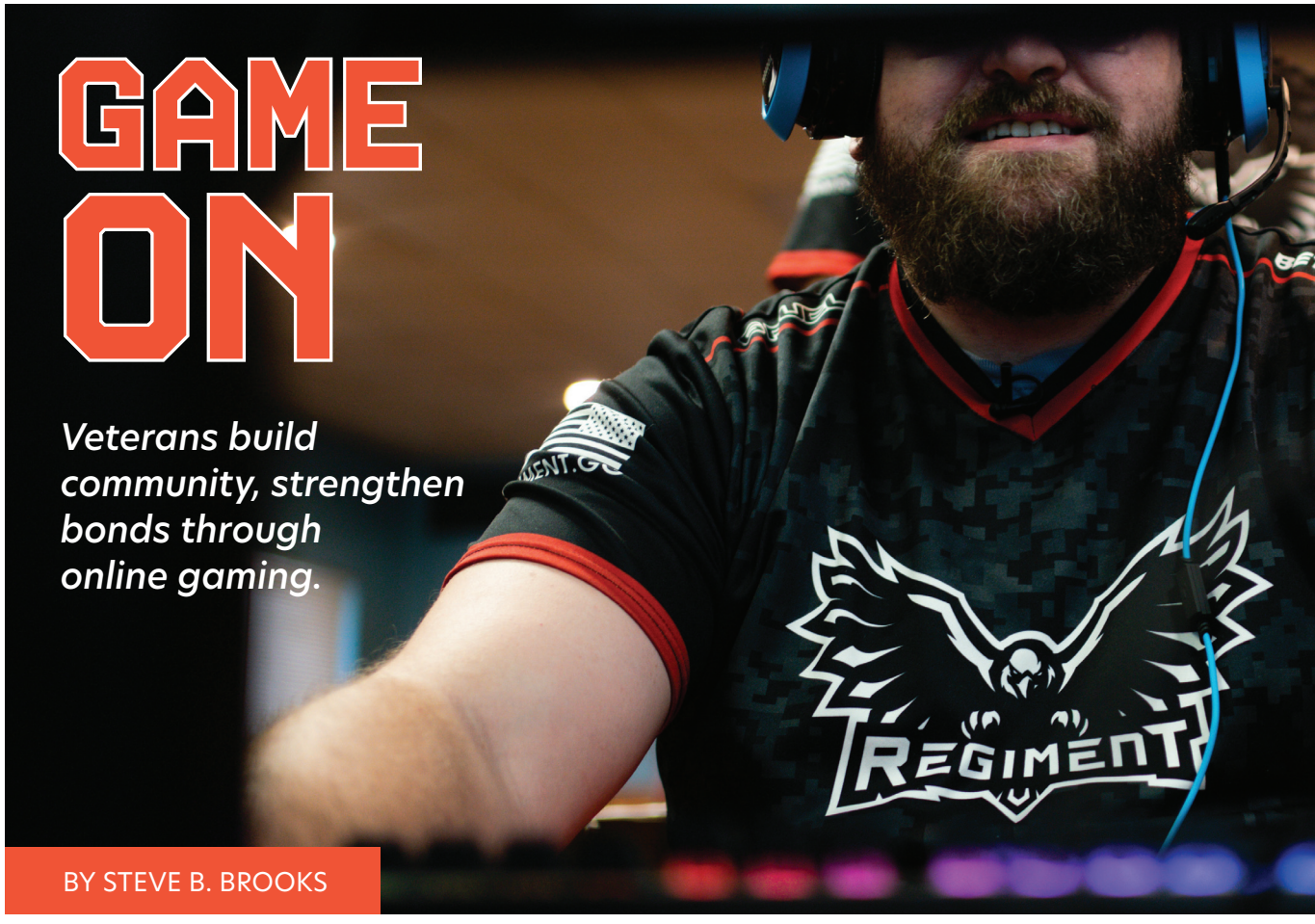
GAME ON

Veterans build community, strengthen bonds through online gaming.



BY STEVE B. BROOKS

While still in the Marine Corps, Chris Earl saw his comrades struggling as they re-entered civilian life. Connected to many of them through the world of online gaming, Earl founded Regiment Gaming in 2020, to assist transitioning servicemembers and also prepare for his own transition someday.

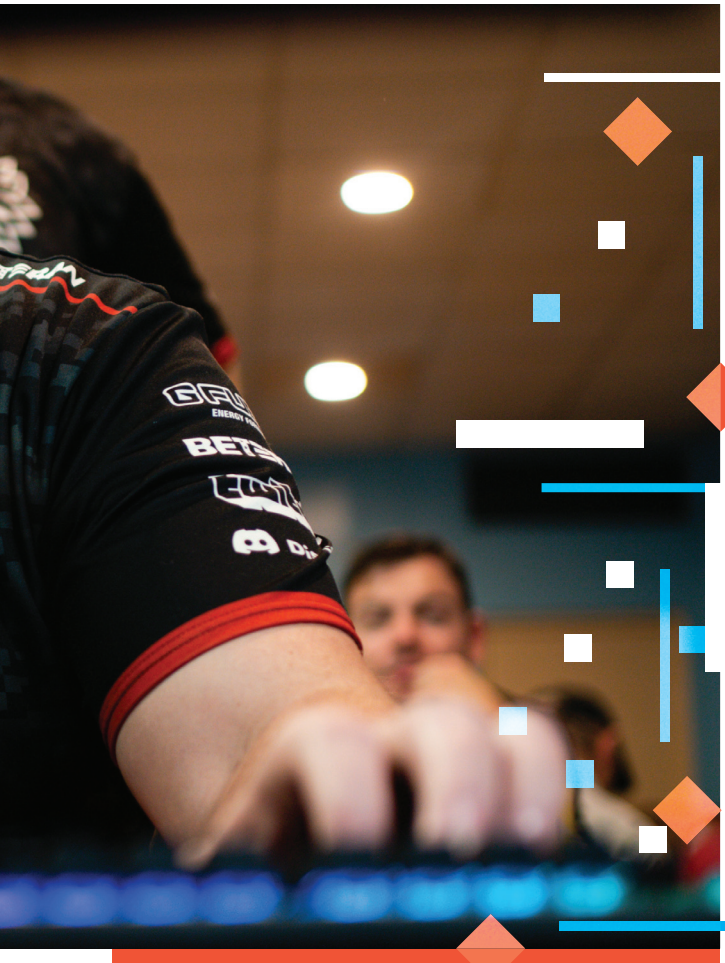
His online video game community for veterans, active-duty military and their families is the largest of its kind in the nation, with a membership approaching 20,000.

As it has grown, Regiment's relationship with The American Legion has also blossomed, starting with an online tournament collaboration in 2021. That was followed by Regiment manning four PC gaming stations for three days during the Legion's national convention in Milwaukee last August. There, members of Regiment and employees of Paradox Customs – which specializes in custom computer setups and providing gaming stations – interacted with American Legion Family members of all ages.

The convention also gave Earl and others from Regiment an opportunity to encourage Legionnaires to consider setting up similar stations in their local posts as a way to reach younger veterans through gaming. Regiment and Paradox even teamed up to give away a $3,000 gaming PC in a drawing at the national convention. The winner was Tom Hicks, commander of the American Legion Department of West Virginia and Post 3 in Moundsville.

"We'd like to have these gaming stations in posts across the country to target the younger demographic of veterans," says Earl, a member of the Legion's Department of California. "With all the peripherals and gaming equipment, (a four-PC setup) costs less than $10,000. It's easy to monetize gaming and make this money back. A lot of post-9/11 veterans are definitely going to come into these posts."

Paradox founder/owner Arpit Manaktala says his company is willing to both rent gaming PCs to posts and provide support. "If it's a big event the



Marine Corps veteran and American Legion member Ken Meadows, 39, of Jacobsburg, Ohio, plays "Call of Duty" on a new Paradox Customs gaming station at American Legion Post 3 in Moundsville, W.Va. Photo by Dan Speicher

post has planned, we can rent the whole four-PC setup and even be there on site for the event to help facilitate," he says. "That's what we're all about. We have training and support, so we can offload most of the responsibilities of maintaining the setup, but also train the veterans themselves."

Earl has seen firsthand the difference Regiment has made in members' lives, both virtually and at an in-person barbecue sponsored by the Legion in Cincinnati last August. Regiment members traveled from as far away as California to meet fellow gamers in person for the first time.

"Surreal," he says of the event. "I've known a good amount of these people online. Played video games with them for months. A couple of them for several years … 'It's like, 'Wow, that's what he looks like.' You build these relationships, and you think, 'Oh, it's just my gamer friend.' But it changes when you start doing these in-person meetups."

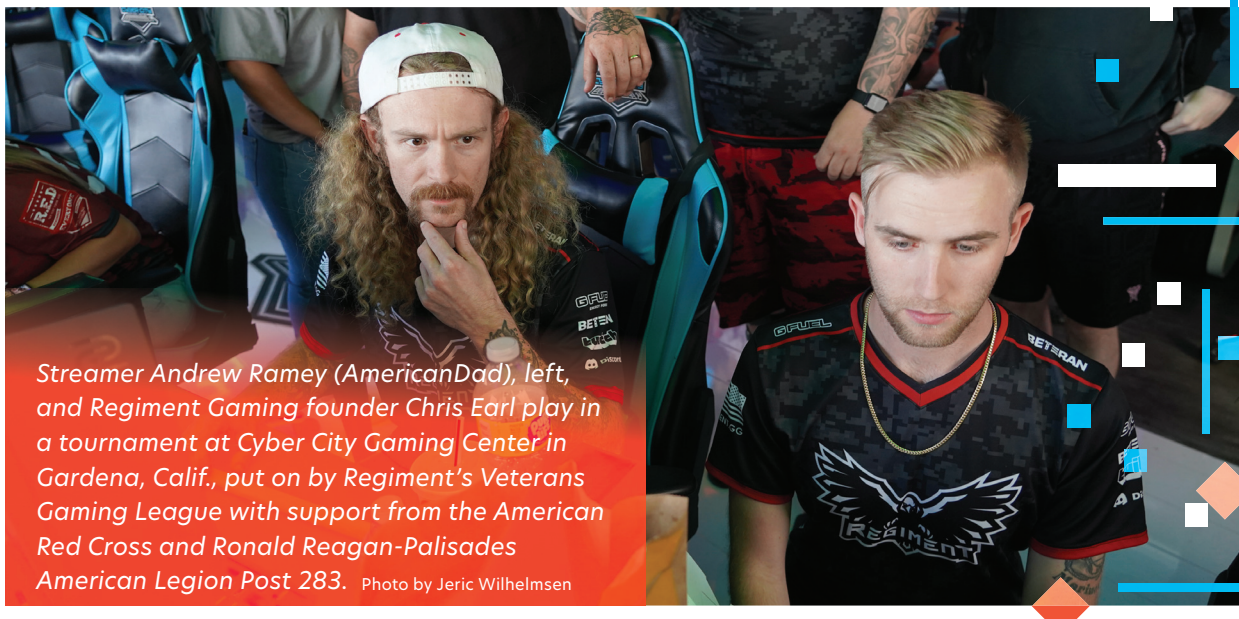
Among the veteran gamers at the barbecue was Adrianna "Whiskey" Bennett, 21, Regiment's content director and a resident of Eaton, Ohio. "When I first got out of the Marine Corps (in 2021), I was so lost," she says. "Going from having the Marine Corps be my everything to a new town I'd never been a part of, I didn't have any friends. Regiment found me, and now it's like I have a home and a family."

Bennett's description of what Regiment means to her matches that of Andrew "Oakley" Wiley, who served in the Army from 2008 to 2012 and deployed to Iraq in 2009. A professional photographer in Los Angeles, Wiley says being a part of Regiment's community has been therapeutic for him – and probably others, too.

"I'm a veteran who didn't have to shoot anybody or get blown up," Wiley says. "We dealt with our fair share of crap. But I feel my deployment was super light. And even just the effects that a deployment like that have on someone's mindset is nutty. For what this does for me … it hits me in my heart and in my head every day that I get to spend with these guys on Discord (a free communications app that lets users share voice, video and text chat with friends, game communities and developers) and at events.

"So when it comes to someone who has seen a lot more (during deployment), I couldn't even put a

Brandon Hatfield of Regiment Gaming, Paradox Customs CEO Arpit Manaktala and Brendan Grossman work with Post 3 Commander Tom Hicks to set up a custom-built gaming station. Photo by Dan Speicher



Streamer Andrew Ramey (AmericanDad), left, and Regiment Gaming founder Chris Earl play in a tournament at Cyber City Gaming Center in Gardena, Calif., put on by Regiment's Veterans Gaming League with support from the American Red Cross and Ronald Reagan-Palisades American Legion Post 283. Photo by Jeric Wilhelmsen

value on what this does for mental health. You can talk to anybody here, and they're knowledgeable about what it takes to survive."

Last year, Regiment Gaming VA Officer Tanner "Blackjack" Yackley teamed up with American Legion Department of Minnesota service officer Jeremy Wolfsteller for a VA assistance workshop streamed through Twitch.

Yackley, who attended the Regiment barbecue, says gaming strengthens the bond he shares with other veterans, as well as giving him a way to deal with the after-effects of his service. "When you're a part of the military, whether you realize it or not, you are part of a brotherhood," he says. "You go through things (together) that most people will never even imagine … events like this, where you can put a face (with) the game tag, it's such a fantastic thing.

"There are a lot of people who have been through so much. Regiment's extremely important to me. I found them, luckily, in a very dark time in my life. Yeah, I may have been physically sitting at a computer, but I'm talking to 15 different people. It's amazing to be able to do that and build those relationships."

Hearing what Regiment has done for fellow veterans has convinced Earl that this is his calling. "The reason I did this full time – I dropped out of college and quit my job – is the first time someone messaged me and said Regiment saved their life: 'I was going to kill myself last night, but I didn't because Regiment was there for me, and the community members were there for me,'" Earl recalls. "I never thought as a 24-year-old kid I'd be able to do something this impactful and save people and change people's lives."

Events such as the Regiment barbecue and its presence at the Legion's national convention have given Earl's gaming community an opportunity to get its name out there. He wants to strengthen that relationship with the nation's largest veterans service organization.

"The American Legion is obviously a household name among not just veterans, but communities," he says. "Just to have them watching our six, helping us out with things like this, it brings huge validity to what we do. We look forward to hosting more events with them."

Steve B. Brooks is social media manager for The American Legion.

See videos about The American Legion's collaborations with Regiment Gaming, including online and in-person gaming events, gaming stations at the national convention and more:

legion.org/magazine/videos

For more information about setting up gaming stations in your American Legion post, email Chris Earl at **chris@regiment.gg**.

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The American Legion & INDYCAR

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2020

Dec. 1 The American Legion and Chip Ganassi Racing announce a multiyear collaboration. Legendary driver Jimmie Johnson, making his transition from NASCAR to INDYCAR, donates $10,000 to jump-start a **$118,500** Giving Tuesday one-day collection for the Legion's Veterans & Children Foundation, a record.

2021

April 5 Johnson and 2013 Indy 500 champion Tony Kanaan, who will drive the Legion car on oval tracks in 2021, use a three-part comedic video to reveal the red, white and blue livery of the 48 car.

May 15 Alex Palou drives the American Legion car to a third-place finish in the GMR Grand Prix at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

"I love representing The American Legion."

Alex Palou, 2021 NTT INDYCAR Series champ, who raced four times that year in a Legion-sponsored car

May 27 Ganassi and Kanaan join Legion volunteers and staff to announce that the Legion-sponsored 48 car will make veteran suicide prevention its mission focus, and Veterans United Home Loans fuels the effort with a $2 million commitment to help the Legion reduce veteran suicide.

"They're going to say, 'That was started at Indianapolis Motor Speedway on Memorial Day weekend.' This is something we're very proud to be associated with. For God's sake, we need to stop veterans taking their own life when they come home."

Team owner Chip Ganassi, in a press conference to announce the cause behind the Legion's sponsorship

May 30 Kanaan finishes 10th in the Indy 500.

As the 2021 inaugural season for the Legion-Ganassi relationship storms along – with Johnson driving road courses, Kanaan on the ovals and Palou picking up three more races in the Legion car – American Legion activation teams assemble at tracks across the country to sign up members, promote the organization and build awareness about veteran suicide prevention.

Aug. 31 Ganassi, Johnson and Kanaan participate in a "fireside chat" before thousands at the 102nd American Legion National Convention in Phoenix, sharing what it means to represent veterans on the track.

Photo by Chris Bucher

"Be there for those vets returning … surround them with what they need."
Jimmie Johnson, 2021 National Convention

Dec. 2 The Giving Tuesday "Give 48" campaign raises over **$120,000** for The American Legion, another record, after Johnson promotes it before millions of TV viewers on "CBS Mornings."

2022

March 17 The American Legion is named an official charity partner of INDYCAR and the NTT INDYCAR Series, giving the Legion prime positioning at races throughout the season.

April 20 Kanaan joins Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb, a Navy veteran, and others to reveal the Legion's "Be the One" livery and paint scheme for the 500.

Photo by Chris Bucher

May 29 Nearly 6 million TV viewers watch Kanaan race to a third-place podium finish in the Legion's "Be the One" car in the Indy 500.

Aug. 31 During the 103rd National Convention, Jimmie Johnson and wife Chandra pledge a $1.5 million donation to The American Legion.

Oct. 12 The National Executive Committee passes a resolution to negotiate a multiyear extension of the sponsorship contract between The American Legion and Chip Ganassi Racing.

$14 million
Earned media value for The American Legion through the 2021 NTT INDYCAR season

$42 million
Earned media value for the Legion through the 2022 NTT INDYCAR season

Photo by Eric Madden

Photo by Bruce Martin

Trackside activation

Volunteer American Legion department teams gathered at racing venues to promote the organization and sign up members throughout the 2021 NTT INDYCAR racing season. In 2022, those teams got a boost from a new promotional trailer that drew lines of supporters and potential members who won prizes, gained information, met the drivers and signed a Wall of Honor.

"This is what we call our 2.0 version of INDYCAR involvement," American Legion Chief Marketing Officer Dean Kessel said after the trailer was unveiled. "We look forward to interacting with a lot of veterans, and a lot of folks interested in veterans causes, joining or donating to our organization."

The trailer appeared at 15 tracks for a total of 42 days in 2022, where 221 veterans from 31 different states joined the Legion, 253 donated, and 1,861 signed up to receive more information. The trailer also appeared at local Legion posts.

Helmet of Heroes

Jimmie Johnson, racing in his first Indy 500 last May, collaborated with country music star and friend Blake Shelton for a special "Helmet of Heroes" tribute to their family members who served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Johnson revealed the helmet on NBC's "Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" on May 25.

The helmet, displayed at the activation trailer, was put up for a drawing, and miniature versions were sold, which raised $13,353 for The American Legion.

The high road

Japanese American veterans, Legionnaires hope memorial highway leads to healing.

BY KEN OLSEN

Homer Yasui didn't believe Oregon would dedicate a highway to Japanese American World War II veterans. He and thousands of other Hood River-area residents endured racism for decades before American Legion Post 22 removed 16 Nisei soldiers' names from a community honor roll in late 1944. "I thought, 'The white people aren't going to go for this,'" Yasui says of his reaction to a proposal to name State Highway 35 for some 430 Japanese American Oregonians who served during World War II. "I was wrong."

Last winter, the Oregon Legislature unanimously approved the designation, championed by Post 22, the Oregon American Legion and the Bend Heroes Foundation, among others. And in August, Yasui joined Legionnaires, Japanese American veterans, their families and state officials in dedicating the Oregon Nisei Veterans World II Memorial Highway. "I think it's an outstanding achievement," he says.

It's also an important acknowledgement of events so painful that for decades almost no one – particularly the immigrant families who faced the bigotry – spoke about what happened.

"I think it's more important than ever to share that history, to spark a dialogue about racial discrimination – and to spark a conversation about the contributions different groups made, whether it's the 442nd (Regimental Combat Team) or the Tuskegee Airmen or the Navajo Code Talkers," says Eric Ballinger, a fourth-generation Japanese American who first proposed the Nisei Veterans Memorial Highway. "This road connects us to the past and allows us to travel through time to this different place, to give thanks and to heal."

Gary Akiyama, left, and Past Post 22 Commander Dennis Leonard discuss an archive box containing many of nearly 400 letters the Hood River, Ore., post received criticizing its decision to remove the names of 16 Nisei soldiers from a community honor roll in 1944. Akiyama's father, George, was one of the men whose name was removed. The elder Akiyama was threatened by a local barber after returning from combat. Photo by Ayse Gursozf

Hostile history That past includes racism that emerged as Japanese immigrants – hired to clear forest land for fruit orchards beginning in the early 1900s – established their own successful farms, says writer and retired professor Linda Tamura, author of "Nisei Soldiers Break Their Silence: Coming Home to Hood River."

A local state senator first proposed legislation to prevent Japanese from purchasing property in 1917. Two years later, Hood River residents formed the Anti-Alien Association to prevent Japanese from buying or leasing land or immigrating to the area. And in 1923, the Oregon Legislature passed the Alien Land Law, with support from groups including The American Legion, the Portland Chamber of Commerce, the Oregon Federation of Labor and the Ku Klux Klan.

"I knew we were looked upon differently," says Yasui, whose family owned a general store in Hood River and farmed nearby. "After kids reached the age of puberty, I never knew of a Caucasian boy or girl dating a Nikkei (a person of Japanese descent), or attending a social dance – especially something like a junior or senior high school prom. Over time, I realized it was a prejudiced community."

By 1940, Japanese Americans were producing a quarter of the Hood River area's $2.2 million fruit crop even though they comprised less than 0.5% of the population, according to Tamura's book. They suffered significant losses after Imperial Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. Some were forced to quickly sell or lease their orchards – or find caretakers – and fewer than 40% returned.

U.S. Treasury agents closed the Yasui family's store the day after the attack, and the sheriff and FBI agents arrested Yasui's father Dec. 12, he says. Masuo Yasui was considered disloyal to the United States because he was a leader in the local Japanese community and had been recognized for his efforts to improve U.S.-Japanese relations in 1935. The federal government didn't release the elder Yasui until January 1946.

Meanwhile, Yasui's brother, Min, spent nine months in jail after he unsuccessfully challenged Portland's wartime curfew. Yasui, his mother, younger sister, aunt and uncle were taken to a detention facility near Fresno, Calif., before landing at Tule Lake "Relocation Center" – one of 10 sites where approximately 120,000 Japanese Americans were held under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066. Japanese Americans consider them concentration camps.

Yasui, then 17, was allowed to leave in September 1942 to attend the University of Denver. His mother and younger sister later joined him there and his aunt and uncle were transferred to the Minidoka,

Nisei veteran Kay Endo of Portland listens as leaders of Hood River Post 22 formally apologize to Nisei veterans and families as well as the Hood River community for racist mistreatment of Japanese American immigrant families prior to, and during, World War II. Endo served in the Army from 1956 to 1958 as well as two years in the active reserve.
Photo by Ayse Gursozf

Idaho, camp. He went on to graduate from medical school in Philadelphia, married and came to Portland for a surgical residency before joining the Navy and serving in Japan. His parents settled in Portland after his father's release but never returned to Hood River.

Open hostility By 1943, Hood River Legionnaires and other prominent community members were waging a vigorous campaign to stop Japanese immigrant families from returning. Post 22 passed anti-Japanese resolutions and ran newspaper ads warning the former Hood River area residents it was in their "best interest" not to come back. It issued a 10-page pamphlet that, among other things, accused Japanese immigrants of complicity in the attack on Pearl Harbor, according to Tamura's book. Post 22 also proposed a constitutional amendment stripping Japanese-Americans of their citizenship, which soon had the support of the Department of Oregon.

"One thing people don't take into account," says Vietnam veteran Dennis Leonard, a longtime Hood River Legionnaire and past commander of Post 22, "is that Oregon was one of the most prejudiced states in the United States."

The nation took notice when Post 22 removed the 16 Nisei soldiers' names from a community honor roll of local servicemembers on Nov. 29, 1944. Newspapers and magazines across the country rebuked the post. Everyone from citizens to clergy to soldiers fighting alongside Japanese Americans overseas sent nearly 400 letters and postcards to the post, the majority condemning the racist behavior. Some suggested the names of servicemembers of German and Italian descent also be removed from the honor roll if lineage was the litmus test for loyalty to the United States.

The controversy grew more intense in January 1945 after Hood River native Frank Hachiya, who was with the Army's Military Intelligence Service, was killed after interrogating a Japanese prisoner in the Philippines.

"Citizens contrasted his heroism with the community's shame," Tamura says.

The Nisei names were restored to the community honor roll in April 1945, seven weeks after American Legion National Commander Edward N. Scheiberling called Post 22's actions "ill-considered and ill-advised and contrary to the ideals and purposes for which The American Legion is organized." But the anti-Asian animosity continued unabated, with more newspaper ads and a new Oregon law in 1945 making it a crime for Japanese immigrants (Issei) to live on or work on land owned by their children (Nisei). When decorated combat veteran George Akiyama tried to get a haircut after coming home from the war, a Hood River barber threatened to slit his throat.

A small number of other Issei and Nisei came back to the Hood River area because their orchards were just beginning to bear fruit, Tamura says. But they often had to rely on white friends to do their shopping and take their crops to market. They faced that sort of hostility for years. When Homer Yasui returned to the area for the first time in 1951

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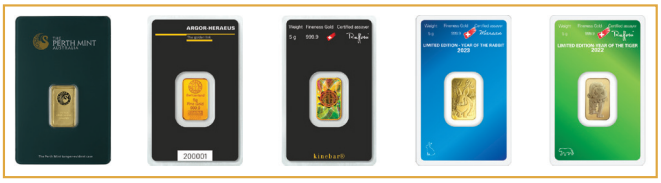

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there was a "No Jap Trade" sign in a store window on the road between Hood River and Willow Flat, where his uncle lived.

Facebook photo

Rediscovery Much of this history was buried in silence, in part because almost no one talked about it. Tamura grew up in Hood River without learning what had transpired even though her father, Harry, served with the 442nd and her uncle, Mamoru Noji, served with the Military Intelligence Service in the South Pacific. She began gathering glimpses of the area's troubled past while conducting oral-history interviews with her grandmother and other Hood River Issei in the early 1980s. Soon Tamura was combing through old books and yellowed newspapers in the basement of the Hood River Library in search of more information. She was surprised not only to discover the honor roll incident, but also the series of five local newspaper ads – signed by 1,600 people – declaring "Japs Not Wanted Here."

"I had this feeling in the pit of my stomach," Tamura says. "I still feel it every time I think about it. It was horrifying to think my family and my grandparents – the Issei – had been treated that way."

Tamura notes a group of about 50 Hood River residents formed the League for Liberty and Justice during World War II that stood up for Japanese Americans, shopped for their groceries and drove their fruit to market. The league's president also purchased a newspaper ad denouncing Hood River's "Witch Burning Spirit." And several veterans resigned from the Hood River American Legion in protest of its anti-Japanese campaign.

Still, Tamura's family remained unwilling to talk about those events when she came back from the newspaper archives with questions 40 years later. "My mother said, 'Do you want to start World War III?'"

Seeking healing Leonard first learned about Post 22's bigotry when a Canadian visitor knocked on the door of the Legion building in downtown Hood River in the early 1990s.

"He came in and said he 'just wanted to see what you dirty bastards looked like,'" says Leonard, then post commander. Post manager Marge Kageyama, who was married to Nisei veteran Bob Kageyama, showed the visitor the door and then shared the dark history with Leonard.

"It was a shock," says Leonard, who had moved to the community a decade earlier.

He embarked on a long journey to make things right with help of Kageyama, fellow Legionnaires and community members. Kageyama helped arrange for Post 22 to host Hood River's first exhibition about the World War II experiences of Japanese immigrant families. The 1994 showing of the traveling Smithsonian exhibit in the Hood River Legion included artifacts and records from the Yasui family's store and farm.

In 2001, George Akiyama and Mamoru Noji were named grand marshals of the Fourth of July parade at the recommendation of city staff. Both Nisei veterans' names had been among the 16 removed from the 1944 honor roll. Then Leonard and Idlewilde Cemetery manager Bob Huskey persuaded Post 22 to dedicate a brick in Hood River's Overlook Memorial Park to all Nisei veterans on Veterans Day 2001.

The most significant breakthrough came when Leonard and Huskey teamed up to erect a marble monument to all of the region's Japanese American veterans – with financial support from the Japanese American Citizens League. It took nearly two years of footwork to gather and verify the names of those veterans – and the help of Huskey's friend Anita Hasegawa, who introduced him to several members of the Japanese American community.

"Some of them still had some anger," Huskey says. But Hasegawa, who had married into the community, broke the ice.

"It began a period of about five months of elderly people coming to the cemetery, going over the list and giving us names," Huskey says. "These Japanese are the ones who opened up their hearts and came to us once they understood what we were trying to do."

The "Japanese Americans Who Served in the Armed Forces" monument, which now bears the

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names of 147 Japanese Americans who served from World War II to Vietnam, was dedicated May 31, 2011, at Idlewilde Cemetery.

"It was probably the largest Memorial Day service I ever emceed," says Huskey, who was sextant and manager of the cemetery. "I feel the Japanese American men who helped us put the monument together were at peace with The American Legion."

Yasui attended that service and was moved by the monument, noting his name and the names of his three brothers "are on that rock." And he took note when Vietnam War veteran Fang Wong became The American Legion's first Asian American national commander later that year.

"I said, 'That means the American Legion recognizes the error of its ways and made amends,'" Yasui says. As a result, he became a life member of American Legion Hood River Post 22.

Honor highway Ballinger was surprised to learn about the area's racist history when he read Tamura's books as an adult. He had grown up around his grandfather, Harry Marioka, an interpreter with the Military Intelligence Service; his great-uncle, Shig Hinatsu, a soldier with the 442nd who was wounded during the battle to save the Lost Battalion in France; and family friend Shig Imai, a World War II military policeman.

"None of them talked about any of this stuff," Ballinger says. His mother didn't know her parents had been sent from their home in The Dalles to the Tule Lake camp until she was in high school.

Ballinger started asking his grandfather questions about his experience in the South Pacific and Japan. "He was overseas, he had a camera, he had a gun and he had his own jeep," Ballinger says. "Here in his own country, he couldn't have a camera, he couldn't have a gun, and he'd be behind barbed wire like his family in Tule Lake and Minidoka."

Ballinger contacted Dick Tobiason in 2021 and asked for his help persuading the state legislature to designate the Nisei highway. Tobiason, a longtime Legionnaire and founder of the Bend Heroes Foundation, had led the effort to designate eight other Oregon highways that honor veterans.

Tobiason enlisted Post 22 and the Department of Oregon in the Nisei highway effort. Ballinger also asked Tamura for her help, given her Hood River roots and deep understanding of the history. The result is the Nisei Veterans Memorial Highway, which connects Oregon's Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway (Interstate 84) at Hood River with the POW/MIA Memorial Highway approximately 41 miles to south.

"We felt like this was a time for the Hood River community – and especially Post 22 – to stand up and be counted," says Carl Casey, post commander, who testified in favor of the highway designation at a legislative hearing. Post 22 also focused its 2022 Veterans Day program on publicly acknowledging and apologizing for its high-profile hostility toward Japanese immigrant families and Nisei soldiers. In addition, it rescinded all of its anti-Asian resolutions and committed "to help lead our community to never allow such discrimination again," Casey says.

It's a remarkable moment in an era when anti-Asian racism is again on the rise. "This highway will, hopefully, be a reminder of the sacrifice that generation made, particularly the veterans," Ballinger says. "I'm thankful that The American Legion has stepped up to correct a historical wrong. It sets a good example moving forward."

Tamura agrees. "Our Nisei veterans were heroes. They served our country valiantly, putting their lives on the line to make America a better place despite the fact their families were incarcerated in concentration camps on American soil. We owe them a lot. We can learn a lot from their service and their patriotism."

Learning is part of the plan. The History Museum of Hood River County is developing an exhibit about the local Japanese American experience with support from the Japanese American Museum in Portland. The Portland museum also will develop related middle- and high-school curriculum and is creating an online archive of documents, including the 400 letters and post cards Post 22 received in response to the 1944 honor roll incident.

These efforts aim to ensure that this past isn't again buried in silence. "Our country has tried to hide history," Yasui says. "It's very important to remember what happened in Hood River. We've got to learn from these mistakes."

Ken Olsen is a frequent contributor to The American Legion Magazine.

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[1]Vaughan CP, Johnson TM 2nd, Goode PS, Redden DT, Burgio KL, Markland AD. Military exposure and urinary incontinence among American men. J Urol. 2014 Jan; 191(1):125-9. doi: 10.1016/j.juro.2013.07.016. Epub 2013 Jul 16. PMID: 23871759.

LT 70067 A

Mexico's Heroes, America's Brothers

Aztec Eagles among oral histories preserved by Texas post.

BY CYNTHIA BUCHANAN

During World War I, the Texas Army National Guard was created as the 36th Infantry Division, training at Camp Bowie and Fort Worth. In 1917 and 1918, this "Lone Star Division" showed great confidence in confronting the German onslaught. Soldiering with the Sanitary Train, which conveyed medical care to the wounded at battle sites or the rear, young Clarence Mobley was killed in France in October 1918. Six years later, in 1924, American Legion Post 359 in Carrizo Springs, Texas, was named in honor of the soldier from the nearby ranching hamlet of Asherton in borderlands that neighbor Mexico.

World War II veteran Jay S. Myers, a future commander of the post, was a rancher and graduate of Harvard College and its Navy ROTC before serving in the Pacific. Myers died in 2021, three months shy of his 100th birthday. He was unwavering in his dedication to the post's oral-history mission, honoring The American Legion's preamble and one of its prime tenets.

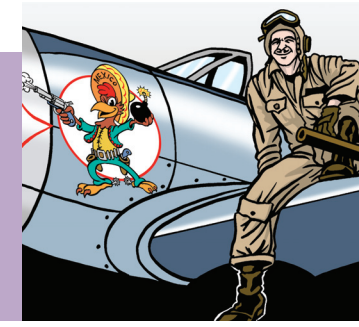
Myers was assisted by Jeff Davis of Asherton, later Post 359's commander. An Air Force veteran, Davis' tours of duty in the 1990s took him to Wiesbaden, Germany, and Moody Air Force Base in Georgia before returning to Texas.

Though Post 359's oral histories include Korean War and Vietnam War veterans, most are from World War II. Davis archived these audio interviews, for a collection he gave to the American Legion Department of Texas. "With our living history dying every day," he says, "the Legion's constitution states a tenet: 'to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars.' We must record the firsthand accounts of our brothers and sisters. If we don't preserve our own history, how can we honor the lives of our veterans?"

The Republic P-47 Thunderbolt was called "The Jug" by American flyers, while Mexican aviators named it "El Jarro." National Archives

Aztec Eagle pilots review a mission plan before takeoff at Luzon in July 1945. National WWII Museum

RIGHT: An image from Buchanan's "Aztec Eagles of World War II" graphic novel Illustration by Mike Konopacki



His efforts overlapped my own while living in Carrizo Springs, as a "low-tech civilian" documenting the 201st Mexican Squadron or Escuadrón 201. I now live in borderlands Uvalde, where one of the squadron's pilots trained. For 15 years, Davis helped me consolidate my unique "Aztec Eagles" story.

In 1942, German U-boats sank Mexican oil tankers off the coast of Florida. Mexico declared war on the Axis powers and sent a fighter pilot unit to serve with the U.S. Army Air Forces – the only moment in history Mexico ever allied itself with its former enemy. When Escuadrón 201 served in the Pacific under Gen. Douglas MacArthur, this was the only occasion Mexico sent soldiers to fight on foreign soil.

Before the 201st Squadron fought the Japanese in the Philippines in 1945, these 300 Mexican airmen – 38 were pilots – trained throughout the United States, starting at Randolph Air Field, "the West Point of the Air." San Antonio had been the "cradle of military aviation" ever since the Wright brothers sent aircraft to the Alamo City. In 1916, Gen. John Pershing used the Army's 1st Aero Squadron to pursue Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa over the border; soon Pershing was leading American Expeditionary Forces troops in France, including Clarence Mobley.

During World War II, the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force – of which Squadron 201 was the operational unit – flew P-47 Thunderbolt fighter-bombers along Texas' frontier. I had heard of ammunition dumps on Carrizo Springs ranches. Fluent in Spanish, I interviewed Aztec Eagles veterans on audio and videotape. My 2005 slideshow "Aztec Eagles of World War II: Mexico's Heroes, America's Brothers" grew into a graphic novel prototype with study guides (**www.bit.ly/fictionforce**), used at numerous institutions.

Squadron 201 trained at Harlingen Army Air Field, now the Marine Military Academy campus with its towering statue of the U.S. flag raising at Iwo Jima. At the frontier Army town of Eagle Pass, neighboring Carrizo Springs, the Women Airforce Service Pilots helped train the Mexican fliers in aerial gunnery.

None of this multicultural history would have seen the light of day without Jeff Davis, who uploaded the Squadron 201 summary to the post's Facebook page (**facebook.com/TxPost359**) as an article that also commemorates the post's World War II veterans. In 2015, to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the end of the war, Post 359 presented my Aztec Eagles PowerPoint as a public program.

Among the Allied leaders invited to witness Japan's signing of the documents of surrender in Tokyo Bay was Col. Antonio Cárdenas Rodriguez, commander of the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force and 201st Fighter Squadron.

Under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's U.S.-Mexico Defense Commission, when the Aztec Eagles marched across a Rio Grande bridge in 1944 they established an historic legacy – one now preserved by Post 359, along with the timeless stories of its heroic Legionnaires of all wars.

A new generation of military families in south Texas lives and works where these warfighters once trained at forts and Army air fields. The main demographic of Dimmit County is Mexican American; Post 359 has sent many local high school students to Legion programs such as Boys State and the Oratorical contest.

"Our post's centennial being 2024," Davis adds, "we anticipate new members through publicizing veterans' stories." The Department of Texas can make these oral histories available to students and the public alike.

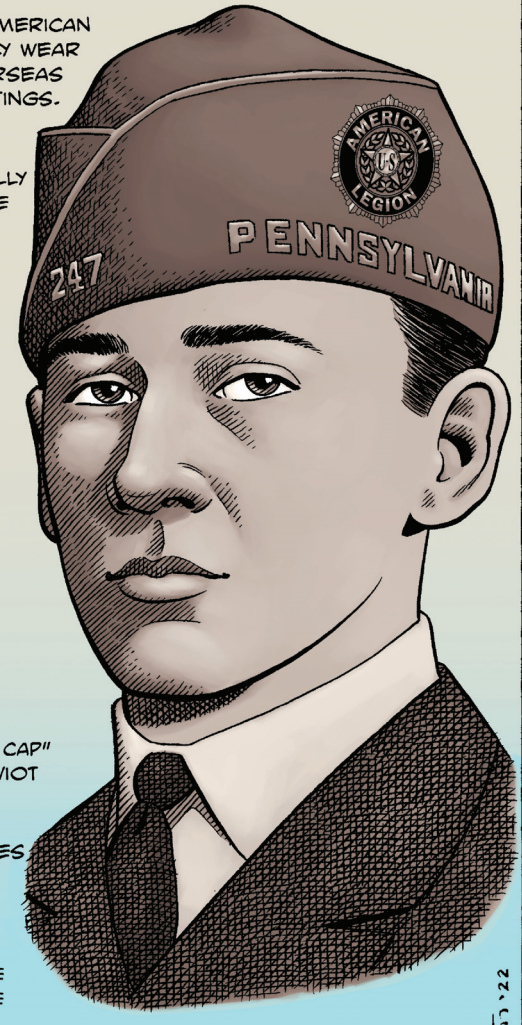
Cynthia Buchanan has published articles in The New York Times, The Washington Post, Newsweek *and other publications. Learn more about her graphic novels "When the Devil Rode the Border" and "Mexicans in World War II" at* ***bit.ly/fictionforce****.*

LORE OF THE LEGION

STORY: JEFF STOFFER
ART: GARY MARTIN
COLOR: MARCUS ESKOW
EDITOR: AUGUST UHL

IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, MOST MEMBERS SIMPLY WEAR ODs - OLIVE DRABS - AND OVERSEAS SERVICE CAPS IN OFFICIAL SETTINGS.

BUT BY 1921, MEMBERS - ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO DID NOT SERVE IN THE ARMY OR OVERSEAS - BEGIN REQUESTING SOMETHING MORE DISTINCTIVE.



THE DEBATE OVER WHAT LEGIONNAIRES SHOULD WEAR IS LARGELY CONDUCTED IN THE LETTERS SECTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION WEEKLY MAGAZINE:

"OLIVE DRAB POCKETLESS SACK BLOUSE WITH BUTTONS."

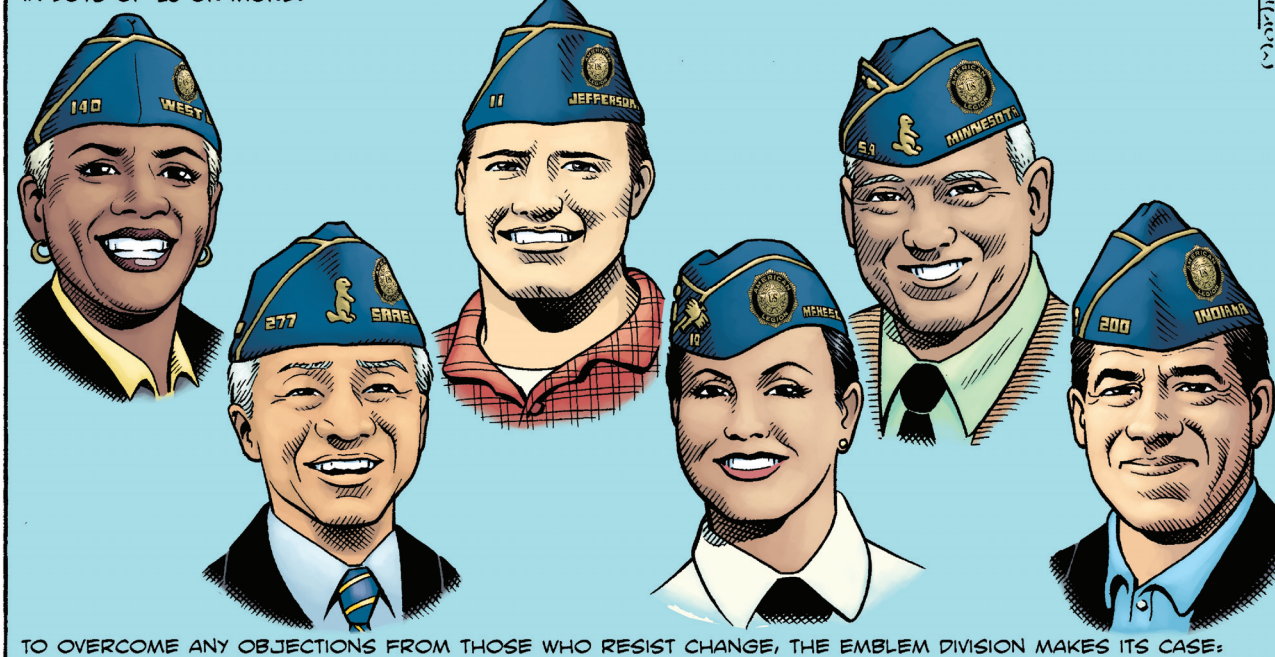
"HEADGEAR TO BEAR INSIGNIA OF ARMY, NAVY OR MARINE CORPS, BUT NOT OF RANK."

"HIGH SILK HAT, A MONOCLE, WHITE SPATS, A RED BOUQUET IN THE BUTTONHOLE..."

FINALLY, IN 1922, GILBERT H. HUGHES OF JUNCTION CITY, KAN., SUGGESTS: "LET'S HAVE A UNIFORM, AND BLUE'S AS GOOD A COLOR AS ANY. IT OUGHT TO BE SMART ENOUGH, TOO, TO REFLECT THE SERVICE OF THE WEARER."

THE L.A. SMITH CO. OF PHILADELPHIA SOON ADVERTISES "THE POST CAP" FEATURING A "SNAPPY OVERSEAS PATTERN OF FINE NAVY BLUE CHEVIOT WITH DULL GOLD BRAID EDGING." THEY SELL FOR $1.50 EACH.

IN MARCH 1924, THE AMERICAN LEGION EMBLEM DIVISION ANNOUNCES THE AVAILABILITY OF THE "NEW LEGION UNIFORM CAP SHAPED LIKE THE OVERSEAS CAP BUT IS NAVY BLUE IN COLOR AND HAS GOLD PIPING AND LETTERING. THE LEGION EMBLEM IS EMBROIDERED ON THE RIGHT SIDE AND SO IS THE FULL NAME OF THE LEGIONNAIRE'S STATE. THE POST NUMBER IS EMBROIDERED ON THE LEFT SIDE. THE CAPS SELL AT $2.25 APIECE IN LOTS OF 24 OR LESS AND $2 APIECE IN LOTS OF 25 OR MORE."



TO OVERCOME ANY OBJECTIONS FROM THOSE WHO RESIST CHANGE, THE EMBLEM DIVISION MAKES ITS CASE: "YOUR FIRST CAP DIDN'T FIT WORTH A DARN, DID IT? THEY ALL SEEMED TO BE MADE IN TWO SIZES - TOO BIG AND TOO SMALL. POST CAPS ARE DIFFERENT, THOUGH. THEY FIT PERFECTLY, AND WHAT'S MORE, THEY FEEL FINE ON THE HEAD. MAN ALIVE, BUT THEY ARE SNAPPY!"

#53

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Getty

"Their blood is spilt all over this land, and we have spilt Native American blood all over this earth defending this land, and we will continue to defend it."

Harvey Pratt, designer of the National Native American Veterans Memorial, Marine Corps Vietnam veteran and past commander of Cheyenne & Arapaho Post 401 in Clinton, Okla.

"We've lost lands, we've been disenfranchised in different ways, but at the end of the day, we're gonna fight for this country. I'm just thankful that the museum is able to do a little part to honor that service and to pay respect to that sacrifice they've made."

Cynthia Chavez Lamar, director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, which formally dedicated the memorial in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 11. The ceremony was part of a three-day event honoring Native American veterans, with thousands participating in a procession along the National Mall. Source: NPR

Of the **350,000** American Indians living in the country during World War II, nearly **45,000** enlisted in the military, making them the demographic with the highest rate of voluntary enlistment throughout the entire war.

15,000 Native American men who served in World War I, despite not yet having U.S. citizenship

400 Approximate number of code talkers in the U.S. military from the Navajo, Cherokee, Choctaw, Lakota, Meskwaki and Comanche tribes

42,000+ Native Americans who served during the Vietnam War, **90%** of whom were volunteers

20% Native American servicemembers who are women

Since 9/11, almost **19%** of all Native Americans have served in the U.S. military, in comparison to an average of 14% of all other ethnicities. Source: USO

Getty

Department of Oregon First Vice Commander Cory Brockman talks with Air Force veteran Kainoa Yamada during a Be the One awareness drive at the Nov. 15 Portland Trail Blazers game.
Photo by Jeric Wilhelmsen

TEAM EFFORT

Department of Oregon, Portland Trail Blazers introduce fans to Legion's Be the One campaign.

For Cory Brockman, The American Legion's Be the One initiative to reduce the number of veteran suicides is personal. He is driven by his experiences with veterans who were suffering on the inside.

"In my mind, one is too many," said Brockman, first vice commander in the Department of Oregon. "Being a veteran, we've been there on the front lines, or we've been there supporting our troops on the front lines. It's just taking care of our veteran community. A healthy veteran is a healthy veteran family is a healthy community."

Brockman coordinated an effort with the NBA's Portland Trail Blazers to introduce Be the One to thousands of fans attending the team's game Nov. 15, Military Appreciation Night. It was the most visible effort to engage and educate the public about the initiative since it launched last May.

In less than 90 minutes, Legionnaires handed out nearly 800 Be the One packets that contained two bracelets and information cards. Printed on the bracelets were the words "Be the One" and the website.

"It takes a community – not just an individual – to end veteran suicide," said Brockman, an Army and Air Force veteran who is a member of Post 104 in Aloha, Ore. "The bracelets are an engagement tool. They are a way to reach out to the community. They can wear one and share one. They can pass one off to a veteran or family member. They are designed as an engagement tool so the public can ask questions of us so they know what to do, and ask questions of veterans: Are you doing all right? Is your home life OK? Are you healthy? How can I help you?"

Fans expressed thanks, asked about the program and put the bracelets on their wrists.

Kainoa Yamada spoke with Legion members about Be the One, the organization itself and more. "I think what The American Legion is doing is awesome, supporting all of our veterans," said Yamada, who separated from the Air Force in 2020. "It's absolutely amazing that they are out here. We're all just supporting each other. It's amazing for everyone to come together."

Yamada's connection to The American Legion began when he was a teenager. He attended Oregon American Legion Boys State in 2018 and has great memories of the week. "The Boys State experience for me was wonderful," he recalled. "It meant a lot."

Navy veteran Allyson Kropf, commander of Post 158 in Tigard, Ore., is a mental health therapist. She specializes in helping veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder. "That is something that is very near and dear to my heart," she said. "Having this program in The American Legion is amazing because it is so needed and fantastic."

Learn more about Be the One, download resources and share your story at **betheone.org**.

– Henry Howard

Coast Guard

Unused retirement assets can help the Legion serve

If you are like most people, you probably will not use all of your retirement assets during your lifetime. Make a gift of those unused assets to help further The American Legion's mission.

Donating part or all of an IRA, 401(k), 403(b), pension or other tax-deferred plan is an excellent way to help the Legion. By giving the gift of a retirement asset:

- Donors avoid potential estate tax on retirement assets
- Heirs avoid income tax on retirement assets funded on a pre-tax basis
- Donors receive potential estate tax savings from an estate tax deduction
- You can aid American Legion programs, services and advocacy efforts, such as fighting in Washington for VA health-care services and helping veterans facing PTSD and other conditions related to military service

To leave a retirement-asset gift to The American Legion, donors must complete a beneficiary designation form provided by an authorized retirement plan custodian.

60 to 70

Percentage of retirement assets that may be taxed if left to heirs. As a charity, The American Legion is not taxed upon receiving an IRA or other retirement plan asset.

To learn more about planned giving, dedicating some part of an estate to The American Legion and more, contact the Office of Charitable Giving at **(317) 630-1225**, email **plannedgiving@legion.org** or visit **legion.giftlegacy.com**.

"Today, we got to witness the world's most powerful rocket take the earth by its edges and shake the wicked out of it. And it was quite a sight."

Artemis mission manager Mike Sarafin, after NASA kicked off its successor program to Apollo on Nov. 15, with the goal of returning astronauts to the lunar surface by the end of the decade. The rocket carried an uncrewed Orion capsule into space for a test flight around the moon and back.

Source: Reuters

NASA

MY GI BILL VETERANS & EDUCATION BY VALERIE HEFFNER

GI Bill benefits and cannabis studies

Q: *I was discharged from the Navy and would like to pursue a degree in cannabis biology and chemistry or medicinal plant chemistry using my Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits. I have read that cannabis clinical studies are ongoing to help patients with cognitive memory problems who have dementia and Alzheimer's disease; my dad has dementia. Since medical marijuana is not approved for use across the nation, will I be able to receive my Chapter 33 benefits to pay for my tuition, housing and books?*

A: The state approving agency (SAA) evaluates a complete approved certificate or degree program for VA benefits. When reviewing the school's program, the SAA counselor will research all courses within that program. If those degrees have tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)-related classes, the program will not be approved. VA will not pay for programs that have a vocational goal within the marijuana industry, such as cultivation, sales or distribution. Approved courses within these programs must apply only to hemp and CBD oil to be certified.

Valerie Heffner is a Marine Corps veteran and member of American Legion Post 27 in Apache Junction, Ariz. ***askvalerie@legion.org***

ADVERTISEMENT

Americans can finally grow thick, striking hair

"This will help your thinning hair and receding hairline in just 30 days" says top US Doctor

Clinical trials show a new hair loss breakthrough can help both men and women naturally regrow a thick, full head of hair – without drugs, surgery, or side effects

Thousands are rushing to get a new hair restoration method based on surprising new studies from the University of California.

It is the world's first and only hair loss solution that revives dead hair follicles. And studies confirm it helps men and women regrow a thick, full head of hair, even after years of balding.

Now, with news of this breakthrough spreading like wildfire — the manufacturers are struggling to keep up with overwhelming demand.

That's because, unlike other methods, it is prescription-free, drug-free, and has no side effects. And while hair transplants can cost $4,000 or more, this new approach costs pennies on the dollar and doesn't involve going to the doctor's office.

Instead, it leverages cutting-edge technology to prevent hair loss, fills in embarrassing bald spots, and **Re-Nourishes** thinning hair — with results you can see and feel in 30 days or less.

As Jeanne F. from San Diego, CA reports: "When my husband began to use this product, all he had on top of his head was fuzz. His hair began to grow after 30 days and now it is about 2 to 3 inches long!"

Surprising Truth About Hair Loss

It is commonly believed that hair loss is hereditary.

Unfortunately, most people think there is nothing they can do to stop it. However, while many doctors will tell you that thinning hair, a receding hairline, and bald spots are due to your genetics, this is not the whole story.

"While genetics play a role, it's not the main reason you lose hair," says Dr. Al Sears, the nation's top anti-aging doctor. "And surprisingly it's not just your age, thyroid, hormones, stress, or a vitamin deficiency, either."

The latest scientific research reveals that hair loss is primarily caused by the stem cells in your hair follicles dying.

"This discovery is a true breakthrough because by reviving these stem cells on your scalp, you can stop hair loss dead in its tracks and trigger new hair growth, even in areas that have been thinning for years," explains Dr. Sears.

Now, at his world-famous clinic, the Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine in Palm Beach, FL, Dr. Sears and his team have used this game-changing discovery to develop a brand-new hair restoration formula that is taking the country by storm.

Sold under the name **Re-Nourish**, it is flying off the shelves with men and women of all ages raving about the results it delivers.

Breakthrough research proves this discovery helps fill in bald spots, re-nourishes thinning hair, and leads to noticeable growth in as little as 30 days.

"I have seen a significant improvement in hair growth. Previously, you could see thinning areas at the back of my head and now hair has grown over it," says Peter W. from Ontario, Canada.

And Susan D. from Fort Pierce, Florida reports, "My hair was thinning. So, I began to use **Re-Nourish** every day on the front part of my scalp. Now I have thicker hair."

Regrows Hair In Just 30 Days

Scientists now know that stem cells are the lifeblood of your hair follicles.

Research from the University of California shows they're the reason you're able to grow hair. However, these stem cells aren't always active. In fact, studies reveal they're only active during certain phases of the hair growth cycle.

"Your hair grows in three phases," explains Dr. Sears. "First, you have the anagen phase, the hair growing phase. Then the catagen phase, when hair gets ready to shed. And finally, the telogen phase, where your hair is pushed from the follicle and falls out."

As you get older it becomes harder for your hair follicles to complete this three-phase cycle. The results? Your hairs get stuck in the telogen phase. This is when they start falling out and stop regrowing, no matter what you try.

This process doesn't happen overnight, says Dr. Sears.

"At first, your hair dries out, becoming brittle, thin, and harder to style. Then, you start finding hairs on your pillow and down the drain. Finally, you're left with bald spots that age you prematurely."

Fortunately, **Re-Nourish** puts a stop to this. It revives the dead stem cells in your hair follicles and reactivates your hair's three-phase cycle, triggering new growth in as little as 30 days — even in areas that've been balding for years.

Reawakens Dead Hair Follicles

For years, scientists couldn't figure out why hair follicle stem cells died.

However, a study from the University of California finally found the answer.

It has to do with T-cells — an important immune cell in your body. The researchers discovered these T-cells are the only way to command hair follicles to grow new hair.

More importantly, they showed that T-cells helped revive the stem cells in your hair follicles — spurring new growth, filling in bald spots and natural hairline.

Re-Nourish uses a unique blend of all-natural ingredients. By spraying it on your hair once per day, scientific studies show you can revive dead stem cells and improve the appearance of thicker, fuller hair.

For example, the key nutrient of **Re-Nourish** was tested on a group of severely balding women.

After 6 months, nearly 70% of the women saw significant improvement in hair growth. Their hair was noticeably fuller, thicker, and healthier looking. Most exciting of all, they grew new hair on parts of their scalp that had been bald for years.

In another study, Italian researchers gathered a group of both men and women with thinning hair and applied the core ingredient of **Re-Nourish**. After 12 weeks, they reported a staggering 74% increase in hair growth.

"It's really mind-boggling that my hair started growing back," says Zan R., another **Re-Nourish** customer.

With results like this, it's no surprise that demand for **Re-Nourish** is soaring. Thousands of men and women are scrambling to get their hands on the limited supply available.

Re-Nourish is not currently available in any store at any price. But we've secured a small batch for our readers.

Try Re-Nourish 100% Risk-Free

To secure the hot, new **Re-Nourish** formula, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at **1-800-927-7938** TODAY. "It's not available in retail stores yet," says Dr. Sears. "The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer." Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Re-Nourish**, all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you all your money back."

Call NOW at **1-800-927-7938** to secure your supply of **Re-Nourish**. Use Promo Code **AMLREN0123** when you call. Lines are frequently busy, but all calls will be answered!

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FOCUS ON FINANCES BY J.J. MONTANARO

The 'good,' bad and crazy of debt

According to the Federal Reserve's latest Quarterly Report on Household Debt and Credit, total U.S. household debt topped $16 trillion for the first time and has increased nearly 50% in the past nine years. Is that as negative as it sounds? It depends. We can classify the most common forms of debt under three categories: the (sort of) good, the bad and the crazy.

The (sort of) good I wouldn't call any debt "good." Necessary at times? Yes. Potentially helpful? Yes. Good? Not so much. Even so, the following types of debt are generally more tolerable than others:

Student loans College is expensive, and unless you (or your parents) did a great job on the savings front (or leveraged military service and benefits), few can pay for it without incurring debt. It's important, though, to borrow only what you need. Recent movement on the student loan forgiveness front also highlights the importance of using federal student loans whenever possible.

Mortgage loans Despite the recent cooldown, houses historically remain expensive. And like college educations, most people will need to borrow. However, the size and emotional nature of this decision make it critical to do it right. In my experience, lenders are willing to lend beyond what is prudent for the buyer. Do your homework and be your own best advocate.

The bad Though common, the following types of debt should be minimized and responsibly managed:

Auto loans Vehicles are expensive and a necessity for most people. As with a home, that doesn't mean the purchase should drain you financially. If your all-in transportation costs (car payment, gas, maintenance, etc.) with a 60-month loan will exceed 10% to 15% of your gross pay, consider a more cautious approach.

Credit cards Using credit cards for convenience is fine. Using them for things you can't afford is not. If you don't pay off the balance each month, you'll pay finance charges. With the average credit-card interest rate above 16%, that's hard to justify.

The crazy This category title speaks for itself:

Loan with "anticipation" or "advance" or "payday" in the title If you need a loan to make it from one paycheck to the next, or you can't survive until your income-tax return check arrives, you need to look hard at your lifestyle and spending. Perhaps it's time to sit down with a credit counselor or visit an installation financial manager.

High-interest auto loans If the only auto loan you can get has a double-digit interest rate, pause and reconsider what you're about to do. A $20,000 car financed for 60 months at 12% will cost you almost $27,000 in total payments. It doesn't matter how much you love the car on the lot, paying an additional 30% (after interest charges) will get old long before the car will.

The perfect financial scenario for most people would be a life free of all debt. Unfortunately, life happens, and consequently debt happens. The trick is to not make a bad thing worse.

J.J. Montanaro is a certified financial planner with USAA, The American Legion's preferred provider of financial services. ***legion.org/usaa***

8.7%

Cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Social Security beneficiaries in 2023, the largest in four decades

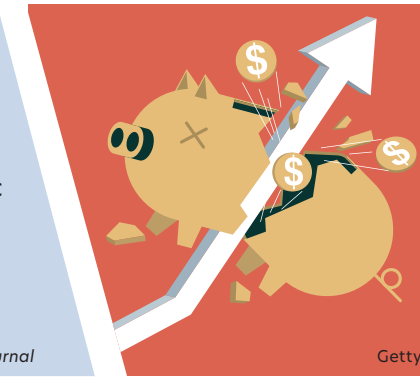
$1,814

Average monthly Social Security check for retired workers starting this month, up from $1,669 in 2022

14.3%

COLA in 1980, the highest since automatic increases began in 1975

Source: *The Wall Street Journal*



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Richard Oertel

WASHINGTON
James T. Cook

WEST VIRGINIA
Thomas Hicks

WISCONSIN
Julie Muhle

WYOMING
Michael Hobbs

How to submit a reunion

The American Legion Magazine publishes reunion notices for veterans. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: Reunions, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206,** e-mail **reunions@legion.org** or submit information online at **legion.org/reunions**.

Include the branch of service and complete name of the group, no abbreviations, with your request. The listing also should include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. Listings are free.

Notices will remain online until the final day of the reunion. Upon submission, allow three months for your reunion to be published in print. **Due to the large number of reunions, *The American Legion Magazine* will publish a group's listing twice a year.**

Other notices

"In Search Of" is a means of getting in touch with people from your unit to plan a reunion. **We do not publish listings that seek people for interviews, research purposes, military photos or help in filing a VA claim.** Listings must include the name of the unit from which you seek people, the time period and the location, as well as a contact name, phone number and e-mail address. Send notices to ***The American Legion Magazine,* Attn: "In Search Of," P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206** or e-mail **reunions@legion.org**.

The magazine will not publish names of individuals, only the name of the unit. Listings are free.

Life Membership notices are published for Legionnaires who have been awarded life memberships by their posts. **This does not include a member's own Paid-Up-For-Life membership.**

Notices must be submitted on official forms, which may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Life Memberships, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**.

"Comrades in Distress" listings must be approved by the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Division. If you are seeking to verify an injury received during service, contact your American Legion department service officer for information on how to publish a notice.

To respond to a "Comrades in Distress" listing, send a letter to ***The American Legion Magazine*, Attn: Comrades in Distress, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206**. Include the listing's CID number in your response.

"Taps" notices are published only for Legionnaires who served as department commanders or national officers.

AIR FORCE / ARMY AIR FORCES

Pleiku AB Assn, Colorado Springs, CO, 5/7-11, James Farmer, (608) 837-8009, jimfarmer@charter.net; **Safeside Assn,** Valdosta, GA, 4/17-21, Gary Jones, (843) 513-0948, safeside-bbs@hotmail.com; **USAFSS/ESC,** St. Augustine, FL, 1/26-29, Jay Johnson, (321) 537-7871

ARMY

Advisory Team 58/73 Chuong Thien Province, Gettysburg, PA, 5/17-20, John Raschke, (217) 793-8346, foxwilson01@gmail.com

MARINES

East Coast Drill Instructors' Assn, Parris Island, SC, 4/27-30, Kenneth Miller, (828) 499-0224, usmcpidi@charter.net

NAVY

***Bluefish* SSN 675,** Myrtle Beach, SC, 4/20-23, John Wittenstrom, (910) 638-1716, jwittenstrom@nc.rr.com; ***Cogswell* DD 651,** Rapid City, SD, 10/17-19, George Overman, (760) 889-2216, secretary@usscogswell.com; ***Hawkins* DD/DDR 873,** Baton Rouge, LA, 4/16-20, Donald Keller, (410) 465-1977, dkeller30@verizon.net; ***Ingraham* DD 4,** Providence, RI, 5/6-9, Gregory Miller, (814) 695-2346, gmamflyer@gmail.com; ***Kaskaskia* AO 27,** Buffalo, NY, 9/13-17, Donald Seymour, (716) 548-9922, bikerdon@roadrunner.com; **MCB 40 Seabees,** Tampa, FL, 4/20-23, Bruce Cheek, (563) 349-4129, seabee40@csteldridge.com; **Naval Cryptologic Veterans Assn,** Milwaukee, 6/13-18, Jim Taylor, (920) 988-3810, jim@videoterm.com; ***Navasota* AO 106 (1944-1975),** Laughlin, NV, 3/6-8, Jim Romine, (509) 520-8098, mrjim13@hotmail.com; **NCTAMS LANT 107 / NRTF Annapolis - Raleigh Reserve (1990-2010),** Annapolis, MD, 3/30-4/2, Michael Mann, (208) 914-8791, mmann2318@gmail.com; **Tin Can Sailors Mid Atlantic,** Virginia Beach, VA, 4/14-15, Ivian Smith, (804) 445-1510, iseasmith@aol.com; ***Vogelgesang* DD 862,** Jacksonville, FL, 5/12-14, Ron Savino, (703) 474-3185, ldobb@aol.com; ***Zellars* DD 777,** Jacksonville, FL, 5/8-12, Lester Sinton, (978) 257-0876, notnis1@comcast.net

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Post 186, SC: William Toner

IN SEARCH OF

***Blue Ridge* LCC 19 Embarked Staff & TAD (San Diego & Yokosuka, Japan, 1970-2022),** Dan Childs, (989) 860-9376, dmchilds@charter.net

Bravo Co 1st Recon Bn 1st Mar Div (1969-1970), Larry Meeks, (252) 209-4737, lkmeeks2340049@yahoo.com

HHC 1st Cav Div (AM) (Bien Hoa, Vietnam, Aug 1968-Aug 1969), Laurence Rohr, (618) 294-4658, lcjrohr@gmail.com

HHC 1/81 FA (Wiley Kaserne, Neu-Ulm, Germany, Dec 1969-July 1971), Laurence Rohr, (618) 294-4658, lcjrohr@gmail.com

Keyport Naval Torpedo Stn (Keyport, WA, 1970-1974), Robert "Bob" Dietz, (215) 266-1235, popps9@yahoo.com

VA-65 Sqdn, Steve Brinker, (317) 695-0273

TAPS

Ernest E. Bacon, Dept. of New York. Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2005-2007.

Jerry Clark, Dept. of Wyoming. Dept. Cmdr. 2021-2022 and Nat'l Media & Communications Cncl. Memb. 2021-2022.

James H. Hale Jr., Dept. of Pennsylvania. Nat'l Vice Cmdr. 2011-2012, Dept. Cmdr. 2005-2006, Nat'l Cemetery Cmte. Memb. 2006-2011, Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1993-2000, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2001-2003, Nat'l Sec. Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2004-2005 and Nat'l Veterans Employment & Education Cmsn. Memb. 2012-2022.

Myron D. Kirby, Dept. of Illinois. Nat'l American Legion Charities Cmsn. Memb. 2013-2022, Nat'l Americanism Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1996-1998, Nat'l Child Welfare Foundation Memb. 2003-2007 and 2010-2022, Nat'l Finance Cmsn. Memb. 2002-2007 and 2008-2022, Nat'l Finance Cmsn. Vice Chmn. 2022 and Nat'l Memb. & Post Activ. Cmte. Memb. 1998-2002.

Raymond W. Moore, Dept. of Michigan. Dept. Cmdr. 2013-2014, Nat'l Exec. Cmte. Memb. 2017-2019, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2010-2013, Nat'l Health Administration Cmte. Memb. 2021-2022, Nat'l Marketing Cmsn. Liaison Cmte. Memb. 2017-2019 and Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cncl. Memb. 2014-2017.

Edward Rodriguez, Dept. of Massachusetts. Nat'l Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1999-2000, Nat'l Foreign Relations Cncl. Vice Chmn. 2000-2013, Nat'l Guard and Reserve Forces Cmte. Memb. 2015-2019 and Nat'l Veterans Affairs & Rehab. Cncl. Memb. 2013-2015.

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What do you call an apology written in dots and dashes? Re-morse code.

YOU DON'T get smarter when you become older. There just aren't as many stupid things left you haven't done.

A BOY went with his father to see a litter of kittens. On returning home, he told his mother there were two boys and two girls.

"How did you know that?" his mother asked.

"Daddy held them up and looked underneath," he replied. "I think it's printed on the bottom."

MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER warned people that *Titanic* was going to sink right from the start, but people refused to listen. All it got him was kicked out of the theater.

A BOSS always scheduled meetings for 4:30 p.m. on Fridays. When one of the employees asked why, he replied, "It's the only time of the week none of you seems to want to argue with me."

A WEALTHY MAN lying on his deathbed called his chauffeur and said, "I'm going on a long and rugged journey, worse than ever you drove me."

"Well, sir," the chauffeur said consolingly, "there's one comfort: it's all downhill, and you won't be needing any gasoline."

A BOY CAME HOME with two black eyes. "Fighting again?" his mother exclaimed. "Didn't I tell you that when you're angry you should count to 100 before you respond?"

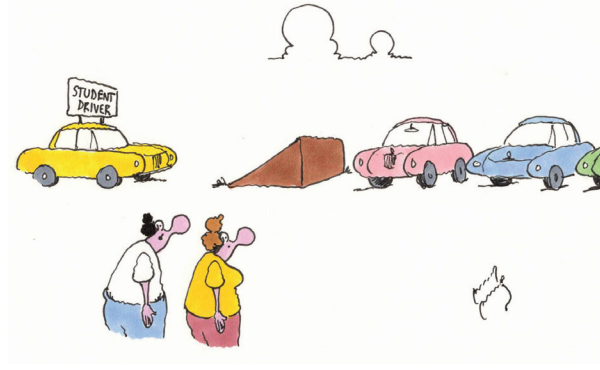
"I did," the boy replied, "but the other boy's mother told him to count to 50."

AN ARCHITECT was having a difficult time with a prospective home builder. "Can't you give me *some* idea of the type of house you want?"

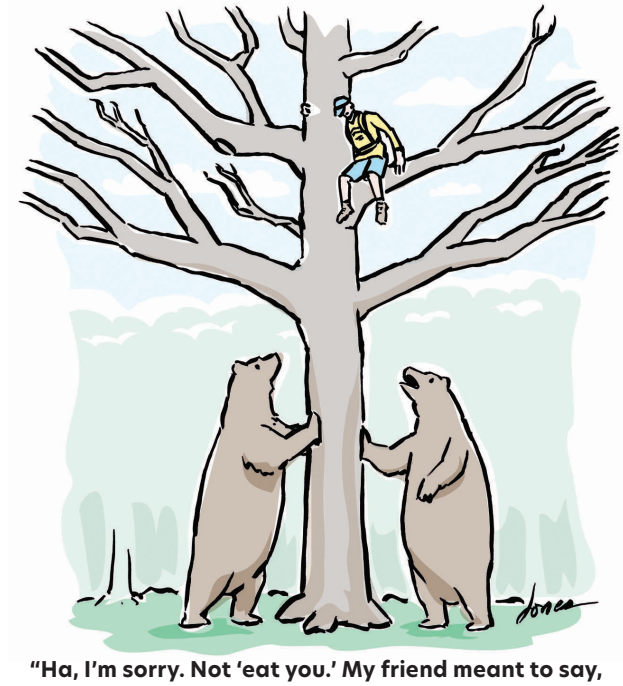
"Well," the client responded slowly, "all I know is that it has to go with an antique doorknob my wife bought in Vermont."

"SENDING YOUR KIDS to summer camp teaches them important life lessons, like 'You can deal with your problems by sending them to summer camp.'" – *Ari Fishbein*

"Great work ethic if we keep them away from the Squirrel Department."



"He's going for his master's."



"Ha, I'm sorry. Not 'eat you.' My friend meant to say, 'Come down so we can take selfies with you.'"

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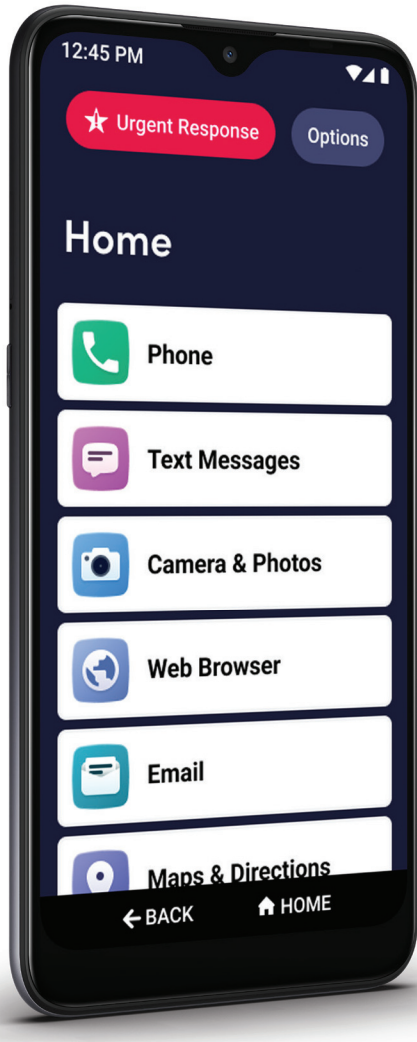

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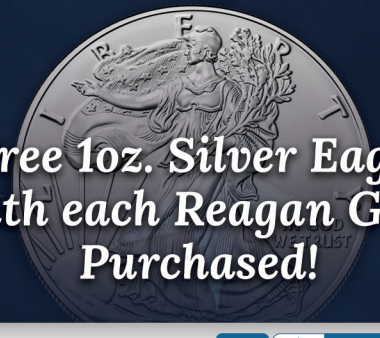

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